

And carped at the Commons with the King's
 mouth Or with the Lords'.,, *
 • i i * •
 i i They plucked the plumage from the
 skins of the poor, And showed their badges that men
 should dread

These mournful words sum up the failure of politicians to find a remedy for the most deep-rooted disease of society. One gain only had been made. During the dotage of Edward and the boyhood of Richard, the Commons had asserted their right to interfere in the government, and had taken on to their own shoulders business of a purely political nature which had formerly been left to the King and the Lords. The balance of power established under the Lancastrian constitution of the next century, itself the root of the Hanoverian constitution, would have been impossible but for the action of the House of Commons in the sad years whose history we have related.

¹ Richard Redeleeaa, *pmun*, it lines 90-84.